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THE METHODS OF A VETERAN INVESTIGATOR AND
TEACHER

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: It occurs to me that some of my scientific colleagues may be interested in the following statement of what I regard as the most important educational and scientific outcome of fifty years of study and forty-two of teaching: (1) All parts of a given animal should receive one and the same serial number. (2) Slips should be used for promptly recording new observations, references, ideas, and all data (*e. g.*, localities, donors, modes of preparation) not ascertainable from the specimens themselves. (3) Beginners should be taught correct methods by explicit directions. (4) Before lecturing upon a species or a group there should be shown a specimen or a representation of one. (5) In all composition the following should be sought in the order named: clearness, consistency, correctness, conciseness, completeness. (6) Published errors should be promptly corrected. (7) All natural classification is dichotomous. (8) For the study of the structure, development, succession and relationships of vertebrates the best group to begin with is the Selachians, the sharks and rays; if several forms can be studied the first should be—and if but one, that one should be—the acanth or “horned dogfish,” *Squalus acanthias*. (9) The objective study of the brain should begin in the primary school; the pupil himself should expose, draw and dissect the brain of the acanth shark; with successive appropriate changes as to forms and methods the high school graduate should have gained as much real knowledge of the human brain as is now possessed by the average graduate in medicine.

BURT G. WILDER

CORNELL UNIVERSITY,
June 20, 1911

QUOTATIONS

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND
DR. WILEY

It begins to look pretty clear that the real problem before the President in connection

with the Wiley affair is how to let it drop with the least amount of disturbance and inconvenience. This does not imply that he will decide the matter without looking into its merits. His decision will not be made until he has personally examined the record. But it requires neither a gift of divination nor a preternatural command of legal intricacies to predict with a great degree of confidence that the recommendation made by the personnel board of the Department of Agriculture, and approved by Attorney-General Wickersham, will not be followed by Mr. Taft. Every day that has passed since it was made has strengthened not only the belief that the punishment proposed was utterly disproportionate to the alleged offence—even supposing that offence to have been of precisely the character asserted—but also the impression that the President is quite as well aware of this as anybody. The Washington news, in papers of all shades of opinion, has been steadily pointing in the direction of a smoothing over of the affair—not for Dr. Wiley, but for Mr. Wickersham.

Before the matter goes further, and the initial stages of it become hazy in the public mind, it is well to recall just what Attorney-General Wickersham did in the case. The personnel board of the Department of Agriculture had found that in the arrangement made by Dr. Wiley with Professor Rusby, an eminent pharmacological expert, the terms of a law limiting the compensation of experts employed by the Agricultural Department were violated. It was not alleged by anybody that Professor Rusby had been overpaid for his work; it was not alleged by anybody that Dr. Wiley's object in securing his services was anything but that of getting the best possible results for the government. The charge was simply that the law made \$4,000 a year the maximum pay for an expert, that it had been decided that this means that the *per diem* pay of an expert shall not exceed \$11, and that Dr. Wiley had made an arrangement for an annual compensation of \$1,600 to Pro-